



Fridley

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

OCTOBER 2014
NO. 190



We believe in a Fridley that is a safe, vibrant, friendly and stable home for families and businesses.

6431 University Avenue NE
Fridley, MN 55432
phone: 763-571-3450
www.FridleyMN.gov
e-mail: info@FridleyMN.gov

Mayor – Scott J. Lund

Councilmember-at-Large – Robert L. Barnette

Councilmember 1st Ward – James T. Saefke

Councilmember 2nd Ward – Dolores M. Varichak

Councilmember 3rd Ward – Ann R. Bolkcom

City Manager – Wally Wysopal

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Neighbors Step Out to Celebrate Community

Fridley values a strong and unique partnership between our residents and police, and Night to Unite 2014 celebrated that relationship in outstanding numbers with almost 100 registered parties.

The weather encouraged everyone to step outdoors, and they did. In the Summit Manor neighborhood, residents gathered in a large circle of lawn chairs representing an incredible display of generations. Marvin and Marilyn sat together, residents of the area since 1956, and a few chairs down sat Sharon, the newest member of the community who moved in less than 24 hours before. Young artists decorated the street with chalk, and all ages joined together for a laughter-filled water balloon toss.

Festivities kicked off earlier that day at the Senior Center with lunch and root beer floats served by Fridley Police. Myra Harris and Captain Brian Weierke addressed growing concerns over scams targeted at the aging population and spoke one-on-one with residents. These discussions continued at Redeemer Church later that evening when Officers Monsrud and Magaña spoke to a large crowd about similar phone and email scams. These well-researched and often aggressive schemes are addressed in more detail in the “Beware of Recent Money Scams” article on page 7.

Police and Fire were visiting with residents on Night to Unite, as was Mayor Lund, the City Council and City staff. Businesses throughout the community also contributed to the success of the night. A huge thank you to Bob's Produce who donated bananas and ice cream to EVERY registered party, paired with the Police donation of



Residents of Summit Manor neighborhood enjoy water balloon fun



Officer Kaufer visits residents at Village Green

Firefighter Dave Larson talks about safety gear

root beer for some fabulous floats. Other materials were provided through a donation from Minco Products to increase crime prevention awareness. Cummins had volunteers onsite at Norwood Square, serving hot dogs.

In addition to learning more about how to combat growing safety concerns, the Fridley Housing Redevelopment Authority teamed up with CenterPoint Energy and Xcel Energy to offer residents a discounted program designed to reduce energy costs and improve heating and cooling efficiency in their home. Read more about this program on page 3 in “Home Energy Squad to the Rescue.”

As neighbors talked, concerns about running stop signs and speeding were brought up, as well as the ever popular Hwy 65 construction, but overall, residents feel safe and connected to the community. On the far south end of town, new Block Captain Tim grilled up brats for the Plymouth neighborhood, and in the northern end of town, several parties merged together at Logan Park. Village Green hosted a well-attended afternoon event for residents and their families, and residents of Monroe Avenue enjoyed some incredible food, as did many other parties throughout the City.

Night to Unite is designed to celebrate the police-community relationships that are built throughout the entire year. Neighborhood Watch groups and Block Captains are an essential part of keeping Fridley a safe and thriving community, and we thank each and every one of you for contributing to the success of our City. ■



EXPERIENCE THE MAGIC OF
PUMPKIN NIGHT
IN THE PARK
AT SPRINGBROOK NATURE CENTER
October 18 • 6 - 10 p.m.
Tickets: \$6 in advance
\$7 at the door

Springbrook Nature Center
100 85th Ave, Fridley • 763.572.3588





New bridge over the backwater to Islands of Peace Park

Paving the Way for Change – New Bike Lane is Just the Start

Big plans are underway for the Northstar Train Station area of Fridley. Julie Jones, Planning Coordinator, explains, “While Fridley is fortunate to be one of few cities in the State to have a commuter rail station, the station was built into a fully-developed area with no planning for access to it.” Therefore, trail and sidewalk connections that would allow people to safely access the station are currently not in place. We want to change that.

We already see the start of these long-term plans with new sidewalks, retaining walls and bike lanes extending from 57th Avenue to 61st Avenue on Main Street. This is funded in part with a highly competitive grant Fridley received from Transit for Livable Communities (www.tlcmnnesota.org). The City was awarded \$110,000 with the agreement that we would provide a minimum 25% match. We are pleased to see that these sidewalks and bike trails were immediately put to use.

In addition, a special legislative authority now gives Fridley permission to use taxes from new development in this part of the City to provide for better access to bus and train transit. So now we need a plan, and we are asking for your help!

The purpose of this plan, called the Northstar TOD (transit oriented development) Master Plan, is to guide future redevelopment of the area in a way that will support pedestrian/cycling connections to bus and train transport. It will also show developers the types of uses and designs the City has basically pre-approved for the area – an area where people can work, live and play all in their own neighborhood.

Based on July’s open house at Stevenson Elementary, the Islands of Peace Park sparks a lot of interest. Options such as new playground and picnic areas, an open air pavilion, a new bridge and new trail connections are being considered.

The area of the City affected by these plans includes Main Street west to the river and 62nd Way south to the freeway. If you missed initial meetings, the presentation (including maps) is posted on the City’s website: www.FridleyMN.gov.

Presentation of the final plan to the public is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, November 5. Watch the City website and cable channel for details on time and location. ■

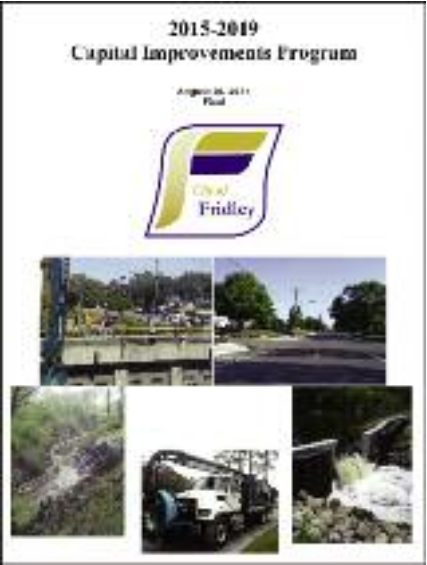
Council Approves 2015-2019 Capital Improvements Plan

At the August 25 Council Meeting, the City Council passed a resolution approving the 2015-2019 Capital Improvements Plan, often referred to as the CIP. The CIP contains the City’s plan to provide and maintain facilities and infrastructure for the citizens and businesses of Fridley within the constraints of limited resources. On average over the next five years, the City anticipates to invest over \$6 million annually towards capital projects.

The City’s annual property tax levy is about \$11.5 million, of which less than 1 percent is dedicated to capital projects. Other financing sources such as Local Government Aid (LGA), State and Federal Highway taxes, special assessments, user fees (water, sewer, and storm water utility charges), and other state and federal grants fund a majority of the planned capital improvements.

The goal of creating a CIP is to focus on capital projects over both the upcoming year and the foreseeable future. Capital projects often require planning well into the future to assure financing and implementation procedures are in alignment. The CIP document assists with that planning and brings all projects together under the cover of a single document.

The CIP includes funding priorities and planning principles that help guide the planning process. Priority rankings include projects that: (1) contribute to the public health and welfare, (2) maintain an existing system or make it more efficient, and (3) expand public services. Planning principles include: supporting the City’s long-term strategic goals, updating the CIP annually to reflect changing capital needs, and being consistent with the annual operating budget such that future operating costs will be projected and included in operating budget forecasts.



Highlights to note in the CIP include dedicating 100 percent of anticipated LGA to capital projects. The City has worked hard over the last several years to remove LGA from the General Fund and dedicating it towards capital projects. By dedicating LGA proceeds toward Capital Project Funds such as equipment, parks, and building improvements, the City is better managing itself against potential last minute cuts in funding. It is much easier to manage one-time capital projects versus on-going operating budgets that require continuous funding.

Another highlight of the CIP and also a goal of the Council is to reduce and eventually eliminate the use of capital equipment certificates. With the addition of new LGA funding over the last year, that goal is now realized. This CIP has eliminated any need for capital equipment certificates and, as long as funding levels for LGA are maintained, this goal should continue to be realized in future years. Capital equipment certificates are debt instruments used to finance capital equipment over a ten-year time frame. Eliminating capital equipment certificates reduces interest charges and subsequently lessens the burden on taxpayers.

The approval of the CIP is not the last step in the budget and planning process. The capital items scheduled for 2015 will also be included in the 2015 annual budget under each project’s respective fund for Council’s review and final approval in December. The 2015-2019 CIP can be located on the City’s website under Gov’t-City Documents at www.FridleyMN.gov. If you have any questions or comments in regards to the CIP or budget process, please contact the City’s Finance Director, Darin Nelson at Darin.Nelson@FridleyMN.gov. ■

Chores and More: Invaluable Program to Help Seniors Stay in Their Homes

Lucille is active in her community, volunteers regularly at the Fridley Senior Center and is in good health. She gets around fine, sometimes with the assistance of a walker, but there are a few days that get hard with lawn mowing and snow removal. It is times like this that the Chores and More program gives her a helping hand.

Another senior takes pride in her garden, but it became difficult to kneel down and she was faced with the possibility of removing it, a \$1,000 expense. But instead, a fabulous worker from Chores and More helped her restructure the garden to make it more self-sustaining. She also gives an occasional helping hand with weeding and upkeep. There are others who need regular housekeeping or cannot push a lawnmower, and many who struggle with snow removal during our long Minnesota winters. This is when Chores and More becomes an invaluable asset for our community.

Jean Penn, the Chores & More Coordinator, describes the extent of the program. “Last year, we served approximately 370 households with about 60 active workers and a few occasional ones.” Some workers



Todd and Jean Zimba ready to start winter by giving a hand to Chores and More.

only work with one residence, while others take on over 20 at times. From minor housekeeping (laundry, cleaning bathrooms, vacuuming) to special projects such as washing windows or repairing steps, these workers provide seniors with the opportunity to remain living in their homes.

Chores and More is funded through a Federal Title III grant from the Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging (MAAA). It helps cover the administrative costs of hosting such a program, fees like staff salary, postage,

Chores and More, continued on page 5

Get Out and Vote: November 4

Behind the Scenes for Election Day:

Election Day consists of voters going into their precincts to vote and leaving with an “I voted” sticker. Seems simple enough, however, an immense amount of work goes into making Election Day happen.

There are state laws to follow and county guidelines to go by. A challenging part of making Election Day happen can be finding election judges and placing them in precincts according to where they vote, their political party, and the time of day they can work. Each judge is required to attend election judge training conducted by the county. At these training sessions, the judges learn all about the equipment, unexpected questions and situations that may arise, and how to make an election day run smoothly. Head judges also attend an additional training put on by the City the week before the election. On Election Day, election judges show up to the precincts at 6:00 a.m. to set up. They are then assigned a duty in the polling place, such as being a greeter or distributing the ballots, and help voters with anything they may need. Election Day would not be possible without head/election judges.

Tasks such as making posters, testing the equipment, arranging all the polling locations, getting supplies organized, and administering absentee voting are a few of the many duties the City of Fridley’s Election Administration does beforehand. “It is really fun to work in the administration side and see what all goes on to get ready for and on Election Day,” says election intern Moranda Zimmer. Even though the majority of the work is done prior, it does not stop after Election Day. There is sorting to be done, supplies to be returned to the County, and sometimes even recounts. The administration is already working hard to get

everything ready for the General Election, and hopes to see the citizens of Fridley vote on November 4!

Recap of the 2014 Primary Election:

The 2014 Primary Election was held on August 12. Statewide voter turnout was said to be near 12 percent, while Fridley’s was about 10 percent. This election was held to narrow down candidates for the General Election Ballot.

General Election:

The 2014 General Election will take place on November 4. Polls will open on Election Day at 7:00 a.m. and will close at 8:00 p.m. There are sample ballots available for those who wish to review the ballot before entering the polling place. You can stop into the Fridley Municipal Center, or they are also available online at www.mnvotes.org.

Absentee Voting:

Absentee voting begins 45 days before the election. Voters may now cast an absentee ballot in person at Fridley City Hall prior to the election. All absentee ballots by mail will be conducted by Anoka County. Voters no longer need a reason to vote by absentee. An absentee application is required to be completed when requesting an absentee ballot.

Absentee voting for the 2014 General Election began on September 19 and ends at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, November 3. City offices will be open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturday, November 1, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. In order to process the ballots in a timely matter, we ask voters to come in as early as possible.

Voting at the Precinct Location:

There are no polling location changes this year. Those voters planning to vote at their precincts (polling locations) will go to the precincts they voted at for the 2014 Primary Election, and the 2012 municipal, federal, and state elections located at:

Ward 1, Precinct 1	Grace Evangelical Church	755 73rd Avenue
Ward 1, Precinct 2	Hayes Elementary	615 Mississippi Street
Ward 1, Precinct 3	Fridley Municipal Center	6431 University Avenue
Ward 1, Precinct 4	Fridley Community Center	6085 7th Street NE
Ward 2, Precinct 1	Woodcrest Elementary	880 Osborne Road
Ward 2, Precinct 2	Michael Servetus Unitarian Church	6565 Oakley Drive
Ward 2, Precinct 3	St. Phillip’s Lutheran Church	6180 Highway 65
Ward 2, Precinct 4	North Park Elementary	5575 Fillmore Street (off Lynde Drive)
Ward 3, Precinct 1	Springbrook Nature Center	100 85th Avenue NE
Ward 3, Precinct 2	Redeemer Lutheran Church	61 Mississippi Way
Ward 3, Precinct 3	Stevenson Elementary	6080 East River Road
Ward 3, Precinct 4	Fridley Covenant Church	6390 University Avenue NE

If you have any election questions or are interested in serving as an election judge, please contact the City Clerk at 763-572-3523 or elections@FridleyMN.gov. Be sure to go out and vote either by absentee, or at your polling location! ■

Home Energy Squad® to the Rescue

As the colder weather marks the start to a long Minnesota winter, the City of Fridley wants to help you find ways to improve your home by making it more efficient and comfortable. Sometimes it is hard to know where to start. Fortunately, there is now an affordable, comprehensive, residential energy-saving program available to you – Home Energy Squad Enhanced. This program helps you start saving money and energy right away.

The Home Energy Squad, an effort from Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy, offers a two-hour visit to your home with immediate results. You get a customized energy consultation and a variety of energy saving products installed—over a \$200 value! This comprehensive service is normally \$70, but Fridley residents benefit from a \$20 discount thanks to a partnership between the Center for Energy & Environment (CEE) and the Fridley Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA).

Products that can be installed at the visit:

- Door weather stripping
- Programmable thermostat
- CFLs – standard and decorative
- High-efficiency shower heads
- Kitchen and bathroom faucet aerators
- Water heater blanket

Services included in the visit:

- Blower door test to check for air leaks
- Insulation inspection
- Combustion safety test on heating system and water heater
- Product installation
- Home energy fitness report

In addition to the Home Energy Squad Enhanced program, Xcel offers a number of other programs designed to save energy and save you money. Have an old refrigerator in the garage or basement? Lower your energy bills by up to \$100 per year by recycling it through Xcel, plus get free pickup and a \$35 cash back rebate, only available through the end of October. Concerned about home energy costs? Income-qualified homeowners may be eligible for additional free programs such as weatherization services and appliance replacement. Also, check your local hardware stores for special Xcel discount pricing on CFL and LED bulbs. For more information on the energy audit program, please visit www.mncee.org/hes-fridley/sign-up or call 612-244-2429.■

Trees Get Sick, Too!

Fridley is home to many types of beautiful trees. It is easy to forget that they can get sick, just like us, from things like insects and fungus. Remember - inspect your trees! Catch a disease early, and you are much more likely to save the tree and/or prevent it from spreading. Note any visible damage on leaves or the trunk of the tree. If you would like your tree checked by the City, call us at 763-572-3566 for an appointment.

Find more information on tree health and diseases online at www.extension.umn.edu/garden

PUMPKIN CARVING

OCTOBER 12-16, TIMES VARY

Individuals, families and groups can sign up to help create some Pumpkin Night in the Park magic and show off their carving skills.

We are ready for you!
We have the pumpkins, tools, and patterns.
You supply the skill and talent.

Together we will be a winning combination.

Call the Nature Center to book your time slot!
Springbrook Nature Center
100 85th Ave, Fridley • 763.572.3588





Road Construction Complete – Thank you for your patience!

The City is pleased to announce street improvements in the North Industrial Area are finished. This mixed-use area combines retail, office, manufacturing and truck transport in the area from Burlington Northern Railroad on the west, University Avenue on the east, 83rd Avenue on the north and South Commerce Lane on the south.

After meeting with property owners and tenants, we designed the project with your needs and concerns in mind. The scope of the project included:

- Milling and paving 3.4 miles of streets
- Replacing 2,200 feet of water main
- Upgrading sewers
- Curb repairs
- Utility upgrades

The final cost for the project was within the budget; street work is \$1,100,000 and utility work is \$450,000. The street cost will be paid using a combination of special assessments and MSAS funding according to City policy. The utility work is paid entirely with their respective utility funding. CenterPoint Energy replaced some gas main lines and services. Xcel upgraded a buried cable and extended new aerial service to a business owner.

As the project unfolded, we kept communication lines open to minimize the headaches often associated with large construction projects. Staff provided notices and updates through mailings, door hangings and postings on the City’s website. Moving forward, the City will begin to utilize social media in these types of projects as well.

The City would like to thank the businesses and residents of Fridley for putting up with the inconvenience of detours throughout the project. If you should have questions or comments, please contact Assistant Public Works Director Layne Otteson at Layne.Otteson@FridleyMN.gov or 763-572-3551. ■

The Fabulous Margaret Tschkaeofske

Margaret Tschkaeofske is known for her energy. This year after Fridley’s two-day Safety Camp (hosting 150 3rd and 4th graders), most volunteers headed home for some well-deserved rest. Not Margaret. She went on a mile-long hike. That’s impressive at any age. As for Margaret, she is 91 years young!

Margaret is a long-time volunteer for the City, and for the entire community. Her contributions elicit high praise from everyone she meets. “Margaret is a hard worker,” says Safety Camp coordinator Liz Chevalier. “She is reliable, punctual, always happy and so willing to help with whatever needs to be done.”

Margaret began volunteering for Fridley’s Safety Camp around 2001/2002. A friend and Fridley volunteer at the time, Barney Buss, gave her a call asking if she would be interested in helping out. She has been a part of Safety Camp ever since. Her sister even joined her for a couple years, traveling all the way from Florida to visit and volunteer.

In sitting with Margaret, her quiet, friendly manner makes it difficult for her to brag about herself. Perhaps that is the small town girl in her, as she is originally from Boyd, MN, on the far west border of the state, but do not let that fool you. Margaret is one of the most active and social residents of Fridley. She smiles at my mention of her energy level. “I had to limit myself to one mile,” she says of her walk following the long days of Safety Camp. “I was already out this morning and will go out again tonight. I usually go out twice a day when the weather is nice. In the winter, I head to Silver Fitness.”

Her pride and joy is split between her family (she showed off pictures of her lovely 21-year old great granddaughter) and her gardens, and with good reason. Her hyacinth bean vines are absolutely beautiful, and spread throughout the seven gardens that surround her apartment building. “I’ve had



people come from blocks down to see the gardens,” she says as she walks around her many small works of art. “It’s a tough year for the gardens. The tomatoes aren’t doing so well.” That first hyacinth seed came from her nephew in North Carolina. It has been nursed into multiple, eye-catching flowers that turn to purple seed pods. She even offers to share.

Sharing her time and talents is a natural part of Margaret’s life. When she returned to Minnesota in 2001 following her husband’s passing, she was a volunteer companion at the Senior Center, taking others shopping, out to lunch or just sitting to play cards. At that time, she lived in northeast Minneapolis, but in 2003 she moved back to Fridley where she had lived several years before — a big difference from California where she worked with an airline doing assembly and “a little bit of everything.”

She continues her Senior Center volunteering at Fridley’s Community Center. She just walked in one day and asked if she could help out. “I did a lot of odd jobs there in the past,” says Margaret, “but after I had a heart attack I couldn’t do as much.” That heart attack was nine years ago now and has not slowed her much at all. She stills helps regularly at the Senior Center, mostly with the senior newsletter, and volunteers at her church. Plus, that apartment building with the wonderful gardens, well she manages that, too.

“Margaret is a true symbol of involvement and possibilities after the age of 65,” says Connie Thompson, Senior Center Coordinator. “She is FABULOUS!”

Margaret, we thank you for sharing your time, talents and ready smile with our community for more than a decade. It is volunteers like you who truly make this a wonderful place to live, work and play.

If you would like us to feature a long-time volunteer for their contributions to Fridley, send a note to Raquel.Strand@FridleyMN.gov or call 763-572-3505.

Keeping Leaves Off the Street and Away from Storm Drains=Cleaner Lakes and Mississippi River!

Besides the fact that it is illegal to rake leaves onto City streets, leaves contain nutrients that are harmful to our valuable waterways, so it is important to keep them out of storm drains. Did you know that all storm drains in the City of Fridley drain into the Mississippi River or local lakes without being filtered through a treatment plant? Therefore, leaves and property debris create algae pea-soup in local lakes. Fish habitat is affected when water is dirty.

Go the extra step by raking out leaves and debris that collect along your curb and the storm drain closest to your home. Every time it rains, water from rooftops, driveways and sidewalks carries sediment, roof grit, fertilizer, oil and other pollutants toward the street storm drains.

Place leaves (along with other yard and garden debris) into compostable bags and bring them to the Bunker Hills Regional Compost Site at 13285 Hanson Blvd.,



Coon Rapids., with proof of residency. Fees may apply; call 763-767-7964 for more information.

Another way to remove leaves from your property is to use a yard waste cart, a fee-based option offered by most garbage haulers. Winter maintenance is also just around the corner. Our partners at the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization have prepared a video showing the best winter practices to keep our waters healthy. For tips to prepare BEFORE winter sets in and to see the video, visit our website at www.FridleyMN.gov/recycling. ■

A Shift in Landscaping Practices Can Improve Water Quality

Landscaping Tips

- Be done with fall fertilizing (which is highly effective) by the end of October. Winterizer fertilizer, if applied to dormant grass in November isn’t absorbed by grass roots and just runs off. To find out more about effective lawn care visit the University of Minnesota: www.extension.umn.edu/garden.
- Use more native perennial flowers and grasses, especially in low areas. Capturing water from downspouts or driveway water in landscaped depressions in the yard (raingardens) can reduce runoff. Fridley is now a member of Blue Thumb so you can check out bluethumb.org for more water-friendly landscaping tips! Or call the Planning Department for raingarden information: 763-572-3594

Rice Creek Terrace East

“This area is known as a nice pocket, not a lot of activity,” says longtime resident Jan Johnson of her Rice Creek Terrace East (RCTE) neighborhood. This beautiful and quiet part of town is nestled right in the center of Fridley. Rice Creek borders the neighborhood to the north and Mississippi Street to the south, with Hayes Elementary separating the east and west Rice Creek Terrace areas between University and Central.

First-year block captain Jan Retzer has made a name for herself with her famous egg rolls, a secret family recipe that everyone in the neighborhood is after. Even Liz Chevalier of our own Fridley Police raves about her gluten-free dish, a treat she encountered during a Night to Unite visit.



Jan Retzer and Jan Johnson from Night to Unite 2014.

This is a closely-knit community with a strong bond. Neighbors look out for one another and maintain an active partnership with the Fridley Police through Neighborhood Watch. Crime in the City is at a 24-year low, and residents of RCTE are currently concerned most about speeding. “We wish people would slow down at the curve (at Monroe and 67th). We end up with vehicles in the yard,” explains 17-year Block Captain resident Jan Johnson. “And people don’t stop at the stop sign. They slow down, but they don’t stop.”



It only takes a few minutes in the area to understand her concerns. Residents actively enjoy walking and biking in the neighborhood and cars sometimes drive off Mississippi Street faster than necessary.

“This neighborhood is somewhat unique as it has very limited entrances and exits with the creek running on the north side,” says Officer Mike Keeley, the neighborhood resource officer for Rice Creek Terrace. “There is a good dynamic in this area between established long-term residents and new, younger families.”

The RCTE neighborhood, along with its sister area to the west, are now considered historic neighborhoods as its first plot was filed in 1946. Today these are the properties we see along the west side of Brookview Drive. Nine years later, the housing boom hit, and most of the remaining neighborhood was built up between 1955 and 1961. In the mid-nineties, the City of Fridley recognized the charm and historic significance of this area and hired architect Robert Gerloff to assist in preparing a guide to post-war housing called “Cape Cods and Ramblers.” Its



purpose was to help people understand how they could reinvest in their homes without diminishing the historic value and original character. The City has an expressed desire to do more to identify and preserve these neighborhoods as historic, as addressed in subsequent Comprehensive Plans.

This neighborhood houses the beautiful 9.9 acre Meadowlands Park. Residents here enjoy lovely walking and biking trails, and kids meet new friends at the popular playground. The park is a hidden gem, tucked away within the quiet streets. Also, the Rice Creek Trail easily connects this neighborhood to points both east and west. Residents here take obvious pride in their homes and community. This is a truly lovely area of the City. ■



Does your neighborhood have a story?
Share it with us!
Call the City Communications Specialist at
763-572-3505 or
Raquel.Strand@FridleyMN.gov.
You can take a look at a map of all
Fridley neighborhoods at
www.FridleyMN.gov/maps/general

Chores and More, continued from page 2

and rigid background checks. In fact, it is these background checks that make the program such a draw for seniors. A Chores and More worker actually goes through a more extensive background check than a nursing home employee. The reason for this is that each worker is an independent contractor, entering the senior’s home or property on their own, no supervisors overseeing their work. While Jean does keep track of hours and duties as required for reporting to both the City and MAAA, each worker is paid directly from the senior. This ranges from \$15/hour for chores such as lawn care, snow removal and housekeeping to \$18/hour for minor home repairs that do not require licensing or permits including painting, landscaping and small carpentry.

For those with limited incomes, these services make it possible for them to continue their quality of life, within their own home, without risking their safety. For others, the program provides a resource to connect them with trusted help. The program is open to any Fridley senior, over the age of 60, regardless of income. It also includes seniors who live in Columbia Heights and Hilltop. The grant does require Chores and More to request donations from those who can afford it to help fund the program. Without these donations, Chores and More would be at risk. Those at the poverty level are never asked to contribute. Others are asked to donate quarterly, if they can, with a suggestion of \$8/hour for every hour of service to offset the cost of keeping the program alive. Every donation is voluntary and a welcome aide.



“As a senior myself, I can say that helping other seniors through this program is invaluable. The opportunity to help people stay in their homes safely and in a healthy way is what puts me to sleep with a smile at night,” Jean says. Sometimes it is more than just the chores, it is a way to keep an extra set of eyes on vulnerable residents within our community. Jean describes a day when one worker reported back to her that something seemed off with the senior he was helping. A list of emergency contacts is kept for every senior involved in the program, and Jean called the senior’s son for help. He later reported back that his mother had run out of her medication and that call got her the help she needed.

Fridley seniors regularly involved in the Chores and More program also receive a little extra help when needed. Jean leads a volunteer program each fall to rake and clean up yards, something that can take several hours and could be a difficult project or expense for some seniors. In 2013, 11 organizations helped out, providing approximately 270 volunteers

and over 40 hours of work. The Al-Amal School (Islamic Center of Minnesota) and the Calvin Christian School bring forth the largest volunteer groups each year, with sometimes as many as 90 kids and staff. Fridley Fire, several scouting groups and the Rotary Club also volunteer, and this year Redeemer Lutheran joined in with about 30 workers.

“We always want seniors to know we are here,” says Jean, “and we need workers. Every year we are desperate for fall and winter help.” Some workers are retired residents still active and eager to help out in the community; others work full-time during the day and just looking for a little extra income. If you are interested in working as an independent contractor through Chores and More, please visit the Fridley Community Center for an application or call Jean Penn at 763-208-5151, Jean.Penn@FridleyMN.gov. (Must be at least 16 years old, have reliable transportation and pass reference and background checks.)

Volunteer groups are welcome to help out this fall with yard work. Businesses or individuals who would like to help fund the Chores and More program, should contact Jean Penn at the address above. ■





Meet Officer Nicholas Steiger

This summer marks the one-year anniversary of Officer Nicholas Steiger joining the Fridley Police Department. Nicholas began his work with Fridley on June 24, 2013. An officer's first year is a critical time of training, developing connections within the community and learning Fridley's culture and codes. Officer Steiger has embraced the challenges of the job and his commitment to the City.

Prior to joining Fridley Police, Nicholas worked as a police officer with St. Francis for seven years. Prior to that, he worked as a sworn patrol deputy for Anoka County Sheriff's Office and part-time police officer for the Isanti Police Department. Nicholas graduated with honors from Alexandria Technical College in 2004 with an Associate in Applied Science degree in law enforcement. In addition, he graduated in December 2012 from Concordia University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in criminal justice with the honor of high distinction.

Officer Steiger is part of our night patrol in maintaining Fridley's safe and friendly community. His experience and character are a welcome addition to our city. ■

"Minnesota Disasters" Hit the Fridley History Center

As we approach the 50th anniversary of the devastating tornadoes of '65, the Fridley History Center kicks off a series of events with "Minnesota Disasters." This traveling exhibit from the Minnesota Historical Society uses photos and film to depict both man-made and natural disasters, including the 1965 tornado, as well as fires, floods and grasshopper plagues.

The Minnesota Historical Society Traveling Exhibits Program is made possible by the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. This exhibit is free to the public at the Fridley History Center.

Fridley History Center
611 Mississippi St NE
(next to Hayes Elementary)

Stop by for "Minnesota Disasters" any Saturday between October 25 and December 20 (except for November 1) from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m., or any Tuesday November 11 through December 23 from 2 - 4 p.m. Beginning in November, you can also see the museum's popular "Christmas in the 1960s" exhibit. For more information, please visit www.fridleyhistoricalsociety.org or call 763-571-0120.

Fire Inspection = Education and Prevention

Every 23 seconds, a fire department responds to a fire somewhere in the nation. (September 2013 report from the National Fire Protection Association.) In keeping with the City's efforts to educate residents and businesses, the Fridley Fire Department is doing their part by putting more concentrated efforts into fire inspections. "Our goal," explains Fire Chief Jon Berg, "is to visit every commercial building in the city. This effort could save businesses money in the long run."



In 2011, talks were underway to implement routine fire inspections. Before those plans were put into action, an explosion at Kurt Manufacturing caused over \$2 million in damages. This is an employee-owned company with 100 workers on premises at any given time. Half of the building had a sprinkler system, but due to a residue on the sprinkler heads, several were not triggered from the fire, something that may have been caught during a routine inspection. Fortunately, no one was hurt and those sprinkler heads that were activated saved the building from total loss. Working with insurance and the Fridley Fire Department, Kurt Manufacturing is still thriving today and has installed a new sprinkler system that completely covers both of their buildings.

It was shortly after this event that Fridley took an active role in commercial fire prevention efforts.

For several years, due to financial circumstances and manpower shortages, fire inspections of commercial and industrial properties took a backseat to more pressing city issues. That changed in 2012 with the hiring of Matt Field, who took on a 24-hour per week role as Fire Marshal. That summer he began an aggressive effort to resume inspections. In those first few months of catch-up, Matt was able to visit about 25% of Fridley commercial and industrial properties (259 initial inspections and 223 re-inspections), starting with those properties who had complaints on file or open permits. As of today, Matt has been inside every commercial and industrial building in the city. The goal is to inspect every one of these properties at least once every three years.

The Fire Marshal provides an essential resource to Police and Fire. A new public data safety system is being launched this fall. Within this system, we will have the ability to track corrections to better monitor ongoing issues or safety concerns. In addition, the Fire Marshal will be able to input specific information on each commercial business such as floor plans and locations of important items including electrical rooms, sprinklers, alarms, nearest hydrants and more. This information will be sent to those who will be arriving on the scene, whether it is police or fire, while they are en route which could save valuable time in an emergency.

"Matt is a problem-solver," says Chief Berg. "Our whole reason in doing this is education." The Fire Marshal, with the assistance of the entire department, makes it a priority to be open and available to building owners for advice, planning and discussions. Remodels and expansions are a great opportunity to seek advice before plans are designed. When Plunkett's recently added on a second building, they first talked to the Fridley Fire about what would be required to stay up to code and keep their employees safe, even before the plans were submitted. It is this

type of open-door policy that makes Fridley unique.

"Many times there are small housekeeping things," explains Field. "There may be a better, safer way of doing things that could benefit you. I have never met anybody that doesn't want their employees to be safe. The goal is to not have a fire, but if that bad day happens, we want to make it a little better." Field sees his role as a partner with local businesses. Sometimes the

safety hazard is as simple as changing a light in an exit sign or notifying the department if the business has changed locks.

When Field first started with Fridley, he did a walk-through at 7800 Elm Street that housed four different businesses at the time. There were a number of issues found, including a major one regarding the security of the sprinkler valves. They were able to address that immediate problem, but unfortunately a fire did break out before many of the other concerns were corrected. This resulted in a loss of more than a half of million dollars between all four businesses. However, that one valve change did save the entire building from destruction. There is now a new, viable business in that building. More time could have made an even bigger difference, and that is the benefit of prevention efforts.



Sprinkler heads should be inspected regularly and tested or replaced every 50 years.

Totino Grace is another great example of partnership. Shortly before the school year started, they completed the installation of an automatic sprinkler system in every area of the school. It was a five-year planning process to budget and work out, including multiple meetings with the Fire Department, but in the end children are safer for it. "If a fire were to happen now," says Field, "it would be very limited and very small. They would be able to continue educating."

Without safety, businesses are at risk; and without those businesses to build our community, our quality of life changes. Safe, good schools attract people and increase home values. We are all connected. It is the Fire Marshal's intent to make a positive impact. "We want to prevent loss of life, damage to property, loss of income, even loss of value for resale or the surrounding area," says Field. "I don't want your loved ones or employees to get hurt, and those are my friends and family that will be coming to help if a fire does start. I don't want to see them in danger either. What affects one, affects many." In 2015, the department hopes to open a full-time Fire Marshal position which would enable more time for preventative efforts, education and investigation. ■



Director Abbott passes out information at Fridley Senior Center.



Capt. Weierke speaks to seniors about recent money scams during Afternoon Out last August.

Beware of Recent Money Scams

An elderly Fridley woman gets a call. It is a bad connection but the caller manages to explain he is her grandson. He got into some trouble while visiting Mexico. Could she wire some money to help him get back home? She does not have a lot of extra money, but she loves her grandson and worries for his safety so she agrees. Turns out her grandson is fine, at home, having never traveled to Mexico. And the money is gone.

Police are getting more and more calls like this. “There is very little we can do to recover a victim’s losses in these types of scams. Once the money is sent or wired, it is nearly impossible to get it back,” explains Fridley Detective Jason Cardinal. “It is very frustrating for us so we’ve taken an active approach in educating our residents. The more we talk about it and people are aware of these scams, the less likely they are to fall for them.”

Scammers prey on emotions, whether it is fear, greed or a loved one in trouble. Here is an overview of some recent scams and what to look out for:

- 1. The Grandchild in Trouble Scam:** This is the scenario described above. Watch out for any requests to wire money, especially out of the country. Be wary of any calls that have a bad connection, or the caller claims to have a cold to explain an unrecognizable voice. DO NOT send money. Take time to verify your grandchild’s whereabouts or ask the caller specific questions that only your grandchild would know. One recent victim lost \$1,900 in this type of scam.
- 2. Lottery or Grant Winnings:** Companies and people in general do not just give away money. This caller claims you have won a lottery, financial grant or expensive prize. They require money or bank cards (the kind purchased at gas stations) to process or ship the winnings. One victim lost \$1,000 in fees to claim a larger winning that never came. Another version of this, often in an email, is the royal prince or wealthy leader from overseas who needs to move around money for political reasons or war-time problems. They offer to send a large amount of money to you; you keep a big chunk and send/wire the rest back. Because the check sent is from overseas, it takes longer than normal for funds to clear so by the time the victim is informed that the check is bad, they have already loss their money.
- 3. IRS, Payday Loans and Government Agency:** These scams are the most common and the most disturbing. The scammer will pose as a government agent or attorney trying to settle a loan or tax burden that you have outstanding. They are very aggressive and can threaten arrest warrants or other legal action if you do not send money to satisfy the issue. They will often use legal terms and big Federal or State agency names in order to instill fear. In one instance, a local

victim reported that the scammer threatened to take her kids away if a loan was not settled. These criminals are persuasive, may do research on you and can even change their phone caller ID. ALWAYS request an official letter providing proof of any default situation. They may also send fake emails similar to or as a follow up to this type of call. A true government agency will always send a written notification of any tax due via the U.S. mail. The IRS, Federal Trade Commission or any government agency never calls out of the blue or asks for credit card, debit card or prepaid card information over the telephone or email.

- 4. Craigslist:** Use extreme caution when meeting strangers and dealing with financial transactions. If you decide to buy or sell something on Craigslist or any internet site, make certain to meet them in a public place with other people around. If you absolutely have to have someone come to your home because of the nature of the sale (room for rent or furniture), make sure you have a friend or neighbor with you during the encounter. Deal with cash to protect your checking account and do not meet people in a dark or out of the way location. Fridley Police have had some instances in which victims were robbed while responding to these types of ads.
- 5. Door-to-Door Sales:** Do your research on any business that comes to your door and always ask to see a City of Fridley solicitor’s permit. One victim recently lost out on thousands of dollars after a male knocked on her door with an offer for a new driveway overlay. The original estimate was very low and then the final bill was thousands over when “unforeseen” work had to be done. Another victim paid up front for the seal coat to be done when the scammer had no intention of ever coming back and doing the job. Others have had the work done poorly and the business disappeared when it came time to honor a warranty. Another twist on this is home security sales. A salesperson may claim that your current company has gone out of business or they are with your current provider and need to perform an “upgrade.” Be wary of anyone who comes to your door unexpectedly and pressures you to sign a contract now.

“Scammers are criminals,” warns Detective Cardinal. “Remember, they are preying on your emotions. Take time to confirm facts, identities and locations of loved ones supposedly in trouble. Research companies before hiring for large projects. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.”

If you have been contacted by a suspected scammer or believe you are a victim to a scam, please file an Online Police Report at www.FridleyMN.gov. If you have questions on how to file a report or general questions about these scams, call Fridley Police at 763-572-3629. ■

Neighborhood Watch Goes Virtual

In this age of instant, digital communications, the Fridley Police want to make sure we are using every resource at our disposal to keep neighborhoods safe and connected. We are taking the next step in that effort.

Introducing Nextdoor.com!

What is Nextdoor.com?

This is a social network specifically designed for neighborhoods, and an excellent platform for police and other safety officials to communicate directly with residents.

What does it cost?

Nothing! It is free for both residents and the Police Department.

Why should I sign up?

Currently, crime alerts and notices are sent from the Police to neighborhood block captains by phone call, flyer or email. The captains contact neighbors. This takes time. Using Nextdoor allows for instant, two-way communication. It will improve citywide and neighbor-to-neighbor communications and help all of us build safer communities.

Is it safe/private?

Nextdoor was specifically designed to make neighbors feel comfortable sharing information with one another. All members must verify that they live within the neighborhood. Information shared on Nextdoor is password-protected and cannot be accessed by those outside the neighborhood or found on search engines. Neighborhoods establish and self-manage their own Nextdoor websites and the Police Department will not be able to access residents’ websites, contact information, or content, but will be able to post safety tips, crime alerts and other important information to Nextdoor websites within the City.

How do I sign up?

Please join your neighbors and the Fridley Police Department in building a stronger, safer Fridley today. Those interested in joining their neighborhood’s Nextdoor website can visit www.nextdoor.com and enter their address. ■

Fridley Community Calendar October

- 1 Appeals Commission
- 2 Housing & Redevelopment Authority
- 4 Fire Open House
- 6 Charter Commission
- 6 Parks and Recreation Commission
- 11 Recycling Drop-off
- 13 City Council Meeting
- 27 City Council Meeting
- 28 Environmental Quality & Energy Commission

November

- 3 Parks and Recreation Commission
- 5 Appeals Commission
- 6 Housing & Redevelopment Authority
- 10 City Council Meeting
- 11 City Offices Closed in Observance of Veterans Day
- 19 Planning Commission
- 24 City Council Meeting
- 27-28 City Offices Closed in Observance of Thanksgiving

NOTE: City Council and Commission meetings start at 7:00 p.m. Meetings are held at the Municipal Center, 6431 University Avenue NE. The public is welcome.

Hearing impaired persons who need an interpreter or other persons with disabilities who require auxiliary aids and would like to attend a meeting, should contact Roberta Collins at 763-572-3500 at least one week in advance.



Pictured left to right: Sue Johnson, Cleve McCoy, Margo Numedahl

Fridley Fun is Crafted by These Three: Meet Our Recreation Staff

Cleve McCoy, Program Supervisor: The Zone and Adult Sports & Fitness

“I really enjoy being a positive role model for youth,” says Cleve. “I had that growing up and this is a great opportunity for me to give back.”

Cleve has a very diverse fitness background that started with a multitude of sports in high school. He went on to play collegiate football (quarterback) and even dived into professional football including playing with the Detroit Lions, off-season training camp with the Packers and arena football in several states. No surprise that his favorite part of the job is working with the sports programs, both adult and youth. Cleve joined the Fridley staff about one year ago and has already seen growth in the programs.

“We are definitely on the right track,” explains Cleve. “I’d like to see the numbers continue to grow and be consistent in all programs, and I’d like to draw more diverse groups. We have a great program and it’s important to get the word out.”

The Zone (at the Fridley Community Center) is an incredible program geared towards kids in grades 5 - 8. The drop-in center is open after school every day for only \$1/day or \$20 for a 25-day pass. It allows kids to socialize and have fun in a safe setting, especially those who would otherwise be home alone after school. The Zone offers a plethora of activities, from outdoor games to video game tournaments, air hockey to dancing, and even homework help for those who choose. Friday nights (except during Fridley HS home football games) are especially crazy with 60-100 kids on any given night. New this year, they are expanding from the traditional 3-6 p.m. for grades 5 - 8 by adding a 6-10 p.m. option for grades 7-9.

Also new this year, Cleve is teaching an intense exercise program called 10 Rounds. This co-rec class is triggered to break down 10 rounds of exercises for 3

minutes each. It is designed to test your strength and stamina, and to personally challenge your fitness limits. There is also a new Mommies Boot Camp on Mondays, and the popular Tae Kwon Do and Zumba classes continue this fall and winter. Registration begins November 3 for winter broomball and boot hockey leagues, and November 14 for men’s basketball and co-rec volleyball. If you want to try something really crazy, drop in for open gym Pickelball on Mondays through December 8. Look for all these programs and more in the Fall Recreation brochure.

Meet Sue Johnson, Parks & Recreation “Jack of All Trades”

“I did desktop publishing before it even existed,” says Sue of her work with the City. “When I started, we had only a typewriter so it was truly copy and paste 101.”

Sue has worked with Parks & Recreation for 28 years, wearing many hats, and, crazy as it sounds, she still has that typewriter. “You just never know when you will need it.” Sue does all the marketing for special events such as ‘49er Days (where she can usually be found on stage during the pizza eating contest) and WinterFest (look for her near the horses). She oversees all the administrative functions of the Recreation Department, Senior Program and Nature Center, but she tries to escape the office frequently to take publicity pictures at all the events and programs. Those that follow the department on social media may see their kids having fun at the Nickel Jamboree, Wet & Wild or one of the many dances.

Like Cleve, Sue enjoys meeting new people. She has seen both growth and retreat in programs over the years, and she takes notice of a second generation coming through. “I am now seeing children of children at programs. People who loved it as a child are enrolling their kids for that positive experience,” Sue explains. “Margo was a participant in the programs when I started and now she is a supervisor here.”

Sue has many titles including the “Porta Potty Lady” (since she orders the portable restrooms for the City) and “Jack of All Trades” as she is the go-to person across many venues. Look for Sue’s button designs at the next ‘49er Days (her favorite was the “Whirling Good Time” tornado), and most recently, look for the Fall Recreation brochure with all our current offerings. In the past year, the Recreation Division offered approximately 500 choices of programs and sessions for youth, adults and seniors.

Meet Margo Numedahl, Program Supervisor: Youth Activities

Margo specializes in programs for preschoolers, after-school activities for grades K-4 at Hayes and Stevenson Elementary schools, and special events on school release days for grades K-5.

“I have lots of favorite parts to this job. It’s especially fun being at all the events and activities, seeing kids and families having a great time, and seeing the staff interacting with all the kids,” Margo says of her position with the Recreation Department. “I also see a lot of changes. Many of the summer staff this year were in these programs when I was a leader. It’s great to see the kids grow up and become role models, and to see new relationships and friendships develop.”

Margo is one of those kids. She is from Fridley, went to Hayes Elementary and Fridley High School, and started in ‘99 as a summer leader, continuing with Fridley Recreation throughout high school and college. Her first job out of college was Program Supervisor with Fridley Recreation, a temporary 6-month position that has now turned into 11 years. Today she oversees approximately 15-20 youth leaders (depending on the season) and activities that range from 6-14 kids in after-school classes or sports, to special events like Nickel Jamboree that hosted approximately 300 kids plus many parents.

“In the summer, my job is day-to-day, running to different activities and jumping in wherever needed,” says Margo. “But during the school year, I have more time to plan. We start planning our summer programs in December.” Margo explains that activities and classes vary. They are always on the lookout for new trends, trying to learn what kids are interested in. “Sometimes a class may have the same title but completely different activities from year-to-year. We try to always change it up.”

Classes are designed to give kids a sample of different things from arts and crafts, to introductory sports, to fun field trips. Look for Margo at the Halloween parties later this month at Hayes and Stevenson Schools. She has been known to sport a cow costume or blue dog every now and then.

To learn more about our fall and winter recreation offerings, visit us online at www.FridleyMN.gov/recreation and look for our latest Recreation brochure! ■

AfterSchool

Programs at Hayes and Stevenson Elementary

Recreation activities to do when the school day ends. 3:45 - 5:15 p.m.

Upcoming Classes!

Halloween Fun
Painting & Gift Making
Snackables

Sport Sampler
Basketball League

**FUN School-out Day Trips on
Oct. 15, 16, 17, Nov. 6 & 7!**



Halloween Party

Grades K-4 | 3:45 - 5:30 p.m. | \$5.00
Monday, October 27 at Hayes Elementary
Tuesday, October 28 at Stevenson Elementary

Wear your costume to our fun Halloween Party! We’ll have parties at both Hayes and Stevenson Elementary Schools. KidsDance DJ will be out with music, games, and prizes. A snack will also be provided.

Registration Required: Deadline Monday, October 20.

Fridley’s Recreation After-School Program offers something for everyone! Check out our website for more information and class offerings.
www.FridleyMN.gov • 763-572-3570